



Summer Writing Prompts

Grades 9–12

As soon as the bell rings on the last day of the academic year, most students turn their attention toward all the fun things they are going to do during their summer break. This enthusiasm for summer can actually be used as a source of motivation for writing that will keep their literacy skills sharp!

Practicing responding to creative writing prompts at home can help students strengthen skills such as crafting a narrative, establishing a clear sequence of events, developing an argument, and more. Creative writing can also help young students develop stronger reading skills, especially when they are encouraged to read their written responses aloud.

This guide includes summer-themed creative fiction and nonfiction writing prompts for teens in Grades 9–12. While originally intended for use in the home during summer, these prompts would also be appropriate for classroom use. The prompts were written to encourage responders to draw from various literacy skills included in the [Common Core ELA Writing Standards](#).

Reflection and Feedback—Suggestions for Caregivers

When administering these prompts in the home, caregivers should provide their teens with ample time to respond thoroughly and carefully. After writing, there are a few different feedback methods that may be helpful.

Independent Reflection

- Encourage your teens to go back over what they have written to check for spelling, grammar, or logical errors.
- Encourage your teens to read their written responses aloud. Some may have an easier time hearing mistakes than seeing them on the page.

Peer Feedback

- If you have multiple teens participating in this activity, encourage them to read one another's responses. Then, have your teens share what they liked about the other response, and any questions they have about it.

Caregiver Feedback

- Read over your teens' responses. Check for the following elements:
 - Do their responses effectively address the question of the prompt?
 - Did they structure their narratives with a clear progression of events and/or ideas?
 - Did they successfully implement narrative techniques such as dialogue, descriptive language, and sensory details?



Student Reading Success Through Research and Collaboration

- Do they back up any argumentative claims with logical supporting details?
- Do their responses include clear and effective conclusions?
- Did they demonstrate repeated or consistent mechanical errors, such as issues with spelling, sentence structure, or punctuation? If so, provide corrective feedback.
- Pick one or two areas of feedback to highlight for your teens, and take time to discuss them together. You may be able to find additional resources on the web to provide practice opportunities in particular areas where improvement is needed. Be sure to also point out a few things that they are doing well in their writing

Lastly, celebrate your teens' writing. Encourage them to share their responses with friends, family members, and other loved ones. Perhaps they could send a handwritten copy of their response to a grandparent or call up a cousin and read what they wrote over the phone. And if your child seems passionate about a specific prompt or topic, encourage them to keep writing about it, either via more guided practice or as something to do in their free time!

Additional Resources

- For more information on writing prompts, read our: [Understanding and Responding to Writing Prompts Guide.](#)
- For more information on the benefits of at-home writing practice, see our blog post titled "[Literacy Education at Home: Approaches for Practicing Reading and Writing](#)" by Laura Szech, M.A., and Dr. Deborah K. Reed.